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A Test of our Resolve

by

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35 seconds. That's how long the earthquake of January 12 shook the nation of Haiti. In the hours after the January 12th earthquake that struck Haiti, the international community mobilized. More than 140 nations were involved in the immediate rescue and response effort. Our citizenship is defined by our countries, but we all are part of a larger community of global citizens that aid one another in need. Ten weeks later, even as the people of Haiti continue to grieve for the 220,000 who perished in the quake, Haitians also are showing the world their courage and resolve as they struggle to build a new Haiti.

On Wednesday, March 31, at the United Nations, more than 110 countries will come together again, in support of the people of Haiti. We will hear the Government of Haiti's vision for its nation's future and its plan to make that future a reality. The goal of the conference is to secure the foundation for Haiti's recovery and reconstruction through pledges from all sources—public, private, non-governmental and multilateral institutions. Supporting Haiti's efforts to build back better will not be a short-term endeavor. The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, an analysis led by the Government of Haiti with support from the United Nations and the World Bank, projected that it will take many years and \$11.5 billion to rebuild Haiti. At the Conference, pledges totaling

\$3.8 billion will be called for to support rebuilding efforts for the next two years. These resources are required to lay the foundation for a stable and prosperous Haiti. The international commitment to Haiti must go beyond the emergency response. Nations must commit to working with the people and Government of Haiti for the long-term, to build a nation with strengthened public services, a vibrant private sector and a government and international community that will hold itself accountable to the people of Haiti.

The Government of Haiti and its international partners will be guided by six principles set forth by at the ministerial conference in Montreal shortly after the earthquake. They are:

1. Haitian ownership of the plan for the country's future;
2. Inclusiveness of all stakeholders, most importantly the Haitian people;
3. Accountability and transparency by the Government of Haiti and its donor partners to the people of Haiti, but also the international community;
4. Coordination between the Government of Haiti and donors;
5. Commitment to the effectiveness of investments by measuring the improvements our investments make in the lives of Haitians;
6. Sustainability of our investment through an enduring commitment to work with the people and the Government of Haiti to increase Haiti's permanent capacity.

Looking to the future and rebuilding does not mean that we can ignore the challenges of the present. We will continue to work with the Government of Haiti to address urgent humanitarian needs. We know that any prosperous tomorrow will depend on providing vital assistance today to those whose lives have been affected by the earthquake—those who lost homes, for whom food is scarce, and who have inadequate access to sanitation.

As Secretary Clinton said before the earthquake: "For some of us, Haiti is a neighbor, and for others of us, it is a place of historic and cultural ties. But for all of us, it is now a test of resolve and commitment."

(End of texte)